

SC Restructuring Questions and Answers

- Q. Why is the Office of Science carrying out the Restructuring Project? Our existing structure has gotten the job done for 50 years. Is this being driven by the White House or Congress?
- A. **As noted in the Project Plan and in other materials on this web site, the Office of Science faces many challenges, including increasing competition with other national priorities for funding. The President's Management Agenda calls for all federal agencies to streamline their organizations and processes to eliminate unnecessary layers of management, improve business systems, increase productivity, and improve customer service. Internal and external management reviews have identified the need to improve the oversight and management of our laboratory operating contracts. Congress has reduced program direction accounts and has given DOE clear direction to improve management. The SC Restructuring Project is the appropriate and responsible management response to these challenges.**
- Q. It's clear the Office of Science will have fewer employees when the "Restructuring" is over than it has now. Do you have a target for how many employees the restructured SC will have?
- A. **There is no target for how many employees the restructured SC will have. We don't yet know the details of what a restructured SC will look like, what its skill mix will be, or how it will be operate. We need such information to be able to answer the question of how many employees such an organization will need. Through the Restructuring Project, SC's employees will help us answer those questions.**
- Q. When SC received a reduction in program direction funding for FY 2002, all the reductions were allocated to the Field and Headquarters actually increased in staff. Isn't the SC Restructuring really just an exercise to cut the Field staff once again?
- A. **No, just reducing the number of staff in the Field will not accomplish the goals of the SC Restructuring Project. As detailed in the Project Plan and referenced on the Web Site, the Project is intended to address organization and process issues throughout SC, Headquarters and Field. The most efficient use of resources can only be achieved by looking at the entire SC organization in this effort and making changes that actually improve business processes, communication and coordination. SC will need to consider and receive help from all its employees, Headquarters and Field, to accomplish this.**
- Q. Will program offices in SC be restructured as well as the administrative functions?
- A. **All SC organizations will be involved in the Restructuring Project. If SC organizations will be involved in the Restructuring Project. The initial focus of Phase 1 is to clarify roles and responsibilities and ensure commensurate accountabilities and authorities. The reengineering phase (Phase 2) will take work out of the system by streamlining business and management processes and eliminating or reducing requirements. It is too early, however, to assess the degree to which SC program offices will be affected.**
- Q. Will SC conduct a Reduction in Force to reduce the size of its workforce?
- A. **Dr. Orbach has committed to the SC organization that no RIF will be required in FY 2003, assuming SC receives the program direction funding from Congress requested in the FY 2003 Budget Request. The size of the restructured SC organization, the skill mix of the SC workforce, and the requirements of reengineered work processes will need to be considered in determining the need for personnel changes in FY 2004 and beyond. SC is committed to minimizing negative effects of any needed changes on our employees and doing everything we can within SC's authorities and resources to assist anyone who is adversely affected.**

- Q. If SC does conduct a Reduction in Force, how will it be conducted?
- A. **Since SC is not now planning a RIF, there is no specific information available to share about plans or procedures. For information on Government personnel policy and procedures on this topic, employees should refer to Office of Personnel Management Web Site: <http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/rifmenu.htm>.**
- Q. What are the increased efficiencies you expect from this project? Has the field been falling short of your productivity expectations?
- A. **As the project plan notes, it is becoming more difficult to meet mission requirements within the personnel and financial resources available to us, in part, because some requirements are duplicative, inappropriate, or not cost effective. If some requirements can be reduced or eliminated, we can expect more timely results as well as the ability to accomplish additional, higher-value work within the same resource base. Inefficiency is also caused by unnecessary complexities in processes used to get work done. Simplification and streamlining business and management processes and systems will result in similar benefits.**
- Q. NNSA is being held up as a model, but they have not yet established Service Centers months after announcing their restructuring. Is NNSA backing away from this approach? And if so, why is SC embracing it?
- A. **NNSA is continuing to refine its restructuring concept and expects to fully implement it by December 2002.**
- Q. We hear Congress is considering cutting the FY 2003 Program Direction funding for SC. What affect will that have on restructuring in SC?
- A. **The restructuring initiative is being managed as a project with a scope, cost, and schedule baseline. If there is a change in the SC funding profile, a decision whether to alter one or more elements of the baseline to fit within available resources will be made.**
- Q. Since Oak Ridge is so complex and different from other OS organizations as recognized by Dr. Orbach, is it possible to add someone else to the Project Management Team to represent Oak Ridge since Mike Holland's detail is scheduled to end 9-30-02 per Mike, and he will leave Oak Ridge at that time and the plan calls for the planning and communication phase to run from July to December 2002. There will be a need for continuity after Mike returns to Brookhaven. I would recommend someone who has been in Oak Ridge more than a couple of years and understands the history and the crosscutting Oak Ridge programs and how they work and not just the Science side of the operation. (Specific recommendations were proposed by the questioner.)
- A. **Jennifer Fowler, Chief Counsel of the Oak Ridge Operations Office, has been added to the Project Team. There will also be additional opportunities for Oak Ridge staff to contribute to the Project when Implementation Teams are formed under the Work Breakdown Structure. Adding staff from Oak Ridge who have experience with activities in addition to the SC work at Oak Ridge will be essential for many of these teams to be successful.**
- Q. How is this approach going to be more efficient and cost reasonable?
- A. **As the project plan notes, it is becoming more difficult to meet mission requirements within the personnel and financial resources available to us, in part, because some requirements are duplicative, inappropriate, or not cost effective. If some requirements can be reduced or eliminated, we can expect more timely results as well as the ability to accomplish additional, higher-value work within the same resource base. Inefficiency is also caused by unnecessary complexities in processes used to get work done. Simplification and streamlining business and management processes and systems will result in similar benefits.**

- Q. Since our future is undetermined at best, how can SC-1 ensure that no reductions in force will occur in? What happens to those positions that are eliminated due to the restructuring?
- A. **Dr. Orbach has committed to the SC organization that no RIF will be required in FY 2003, assuming SC receives the program direction funding from Congress requested in the FY 2003 Budget Request. The size of the restructured SC organization, the skill mix of the SC workforce, and the requirements of reengineered work processes will need to be considered in determining the need for personnel changes in FY 2004 and beyond. SC is committed to minimizing negative effects of any needed changes on our employees and doing everything we can within SC's authorities and resources to assist anyone who is adversely affected.**
- Q. What about competitive areas?
- A. **Since SC is not now planning a RIF, there is no specific information available to share about plans or procedures, including defining competitive areas.**
- Q. How will matrix organizations like finance, HR and procurement provide efficient and effective oversight to our contractors and others when we are now stove piped and coordination is different? Look at what has happened since the invention of NNSA, we are more separated and the duplication of effort is more prevalent than ever.
- A. **Management of the laboratory contract, including evaluation of contractor performance, will be the responsibility of the Site Manager for each laboratory. The subject matter experts needed to enable the Site Manager to fulfill that responsibility will be personnel working at the Site Office and Support Center. The details of this arrangement will be determined during Phase 1 of the project.**
- Q. I noticed that in the proposed organization chart there is a combination of site offices and area offices. What is the difference between a site office and an area office? Wouldn't it be less confusing if we called them all the same thing?
- A. **The chart that was included in the roll out briefing used the names of organizations as they exist today. There may be some differences in duties assigned to Site Offices or Area Offices because of different management approaches utilized by particular Headquarters or Operations Offices, but for purposes of this project we will use the term "site office."**
- Q. Section 2.3.7 of the Project Plan refers to "the Oak Ridge Operations Alternative Management Model Initiative Report" of June 10, 2002 as being incorporated into the SC restructuring project as a requirement. Where/how can this document be accessed?
- A. **This document can be found in the "Key Documents" section of the Project website at www.screstruct.doe.gov.**
- Q. Section 2.3.6 of the Project Plan states: "Establish at least one Enterprise Support Center to provide best in class administrative, business and technical support across the entire SC operation from resources now available in SC in Headquarters and Field Offices". SC currently has two Operations Offices (CH and OR), whose line management function will be eliminated by having the site offices report directly to SC. Since the Ops Office would no longer be in the line management chain, they would seem to be likely candidates to be changed into Enterprise Support Centers. But the Project Plan only calls for "at least one Enterprise Support Center" – does that mean that either CH or OR could be closed under the SC restructuring effort?
- A. **The phrase "at least one Enterprise Support Center" in the Project Plan was not intended to imply that either the Chicago or Oak Ridge Operations Offices would be closed under the restructuring effort. The phrase is only intended to give the Project Team the flexibility to recommend at least one, but as many as three, Enterprise Support Centers.**